

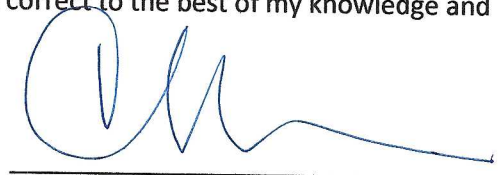
I, Carol Moses, declare as follows:

1. I am currently an attorney in private practice. I live and work in Fresno, California.
2. I previously worked as a Law Enforcement Ranger for the National Park Service from 1974 through 1992. During that time I worked in the Protection Division and was primarily stationed in Yosemite Valley, in Yosemite National Park.
3. My duties as a law enforcement ranger were to enforce laws, provide emergency medical care, perform search and rescue operations, fight structural and wildland fires, collect campground and entrance station fees, and otherwise perform duties necessary to promote the smooth operation of Yosemite National Park.
4. I was a field supervisor for six years, from approximately 1980 to 1986. I was supervised and took direct orders from the Valley District Ranger and the Chief Ranger. The Valley District Ranger was supervised by the Chief Ranger, who was in turn supervised by the Superintendent of the Park.
5. From the late 1970s through the mid-1980s I worked on the Front Country Horse Patrol. During this time I encountered many BASE jumpers in Yosemite Valley, in particular in El Capitan Meadow, where BASE jumpers would land after parachuting from El Capitan.
6. In the early 1980s BASE jumping, led by Carl Boenish, became popular in Yosemite. The Chief Ranger, Bill Wendt, initially allowed BASE jumping with a permit. BASE jumpers could apply for a permit by filing a form with the Valley District Ranger. I am not aware of the contents of the form, or if it required certain qualifications. Rangers would check the permit when a BASE jumper landed.
7. To the best of my knowledge BASE jumping permits were an invention of the Chief Ranger as a law enforcement function. I am not aware that the permit process ever involved the Superintendent, or if the permit system was implemented following an environmental impact study. The Chief Ranger had the final say in approving or denying a permit.
8. During the period when permits were available to BASE jumpers in Yosemite there were several problems. First, some BASE jumpers were resistant or resentful at having to obtain or show a permit. Second, the landing areas drew large crowds, which resulted in damage to the meadow and the accumulation of litter. Third, BASE jumpers required medical and rescue resources if they were injured upon landing.
9. These problems also existed with other park users, for example rock climbers and "big wall" climbers who used Camp 4 as a staging area. The rangers disliked both the climbers and BASE jumpers, but were more tolerant of the climbers because the rangers needed the climber's skills for search and rescue operations. Because the rangers found the climbers useful, they allowed them to co-exist in the Valley and continue climbing there, but were still disdainful of them.
10. The permit system that the Chief Ranger implemented existed for only a few months. Bill Wendt, the Chief Ranger, decided to shut down the BASE jumping permit system and I recall instructions that all BASE jumpers parachuting after the permit system was shut down be arrested. I do not believe the Park Superintendent was involved in that decision and the Chief Ranger acted unilaterally.
11. Bill Wendt's explained his reasons for shutting down the BASE jumping permit system at one of the ranger's daily 7:30 AM briefings. First, he did not like BASE jumpers, and unlike the climbers they did not serve a useful purpose. The Chief Ranger was clear about his dislike of BASE jumpers. The Chief Ranger felt that BASE jumpers were disrespectful to the park and that it was

- not an appropriate activity. Second, enforcement was costly. I do not remember any fatalities during that time, but BASE jumpers would land on steep scree slopes or get hung up in trees, which required ranger rescue or medical assistance.
12. Revoking the availability of permits did not inhibit BASE jumping. In fact it seemed there was an increase of BASE jumping and jumps occurred at many different locations in the Valley at all times of the day and night. After the permit system was revoked BASE jumpers continued to jump illegally. Special patrols were formed to catch BASE jumpers. Apprehending BASE jumpers became a "cat and mouse" game for the rangers. David Neid, a ranger at the time, went to particular lengths to gather "intelligence" about upcoming BASE jumps and would schedule and organize rangers to patrol BASE jumping areas.
  13. Rangers often engaged in subterfuge to try and catch BASE jumpers. For example, a special BASE jumping patrol was formed under the acronym SPLATT – Stop Parachutists Leap At The Top. That patrol had t-shirts made. I still have mine and have attached a photo of it to this declaration. Rangers would hike to the top of the cliffs without uniforms and dressed as campers to try and catch BASE jumpers before they launched. In one incident, Rangers attempted to arrest a BASE jumper named Robin Heid at the edge of the cliff, who then jumped in an effort to escape the rangers. The apprehending ranger tried to grab him, as Mr. Heid jumped, a dangerous situation for both the ranger and the BASE jumper.
  14. I worked on the "Base Jump Patrol" and apprehended BASE jumpers. During these apprehensions I frequently heard BASE Jumpers complain that there was no permit system to jump lawfully. The discussion would revolve around comparing hang gliding to BASE jumping. Even though they are similar activities there was a lawful permit system for hang gliding.
  15. I believe that many of the impacts on the park could have been managed by a better permit system. For example the hang gliding system limits the activity to reduce impact on the landing areas. The park has also proven it has the ability to mitigate the impact of large crowds in the meadows with a reservation system, such as the one currently used for the "water fire fall".

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

February 27 2023



Carol Ann Moses



